

III. B MASTER PLANNING



With your needs assessment completed, what do you do with all of the information you've painstakingly gathered?

Most counties face more than one option. Some alternatives are better than others depending upon criteria, which include costs. Master planning involves defining needs on a global level and then exploring alternative ways of meeting them. For instance, should you build courtroom space in a new facility or transport inmates/minors to arraignments at your existing courthouse? This exploration requires creativity and problem-solving abilities. It is time-consuming but not expensive in the overall scheme of things.

At this stage, your county has tremendous control of cost. Make major decisions now on initial costs for our detention system and, to the extent possible, your entire justice system.

Types of Costs

Costs to be studied while developing and analyzing master plan alternatives include:

- Major renovation of existing facility(ies).
- Minor renovation of existing facility(ies).

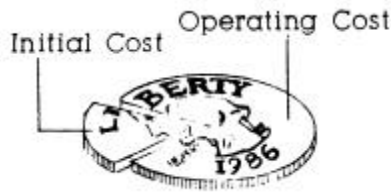
- New construction for current needs.
- New construction for projected needs.
- Aesthetics (often related to the site location).
- Site location, acquisition and development.
- Utility connections.
- Transportation between courts and pre-sentenced jail(s)/juvenile hall(s).
- Transportation between other justice departments and jail(s)/hall(s).
- Staffing for existing facility(ies) "as is."
- Staffing for existing facility(ies) with renovations.
- Staffing for a new facility.
- Efficiencies/inefficiencies of centralizing or decentralizing:
 1. Food preparation
 2. Laundry
 3. Intake/release
 4. Administration
 5. Visiting
 6. Populations (e.g. females, pre-sentenced)
- Space and programs for inebriates/substance abusers.
- Space and programs for mentally ill alleged and convicted offenders.
- Life-cycle implications of all of the above.

Other Criteria

Obviously, cost is not the only consideration. Master plan alternatives also should be evaluated for their ability to satisfy your county's:

- Philosophies.
- Goals and objectives.
- Program requirements.
- Desired means of operations.
- Other financial constraints.
- Other needs and wants, both current and anticipated, for the next 20 or more years.

Life-Cycle Costs



Although this Handbook focuses on initial project costs—largely construction—you should be aware of this general rule of thumb for jails: **initial costs total no more than 10 percent of life-cycle costs over a 30-year period.** The National Institute of Corrections claims the initial cost percent is even smaller. NIC reports that the operating costs of a jail over 30 years are usually 16 times the cost of construction. With most detention facilities remaining operational for longer than 30 years, initial costs become an even smaller percentage of total costs.

Staffing is the single most important cost factor of a new facility. Because staffing is the primary component of all operational costs, you must give it considerable attention. Staffing also significantly impacts your initial cost because it drives the configuration of your new facility. Make sure you know what your staffing decisions (such as staff-inmate ratio/staff-child supervision ratio and the number of control rooms) will cost you up front and during the life-cycle of your project.

The 10 percent rule of thumb, however, is not a formula. County X's \$100 million jail won't cost exactly \$900 million for staffing, utilities, supplies and food over 30 years. During master planning, however, County X can control whether its operational costs will approximate \$700 million or \$1.1 billion.

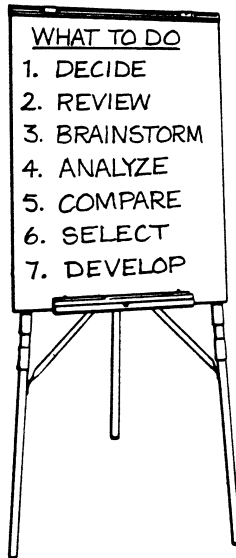
Site Selection, EIRs, Aesthetics

Deciding where your new jail is located also will impact costs other than staffing and transportation. If the site's adjacent residents strongly oppose the location, they may protest through comments on the EIR or a lawsuit, either of which can kill the site and put the project on hold for many months. Such delays often add substantially to construction costs.

Location also can affect what your facility looks like—its aesthetics—and impact costs. For example, a new jail adjacent to a historic courthouse should complement its neighbor in form, materials and/or in details. Even if county administrators are opposed to spending money on looks, the EIR may require visual compatibility. This can drive costs. Even with the most creative architect, detention facilities for which aesthetics are important cost more than buildings with facades that simply combat penetration.

Bearing all of this in mind, other factors may cancel or outweigh the cost of aesthetics such as the cost of transporting inmates between an outlying facility and the downtown courts.

What To Do



Use your Advisory Committee plus consultants to develop and analyze master plan alternatives and to make recommendations to your Board of Supervisors. More specifically, follow these steps:

Step 1. Decide who on your Advisory Committee has the time and expertise to plan, analyze and estimate costs, (Refer back to Establishing Your Team, Section II.C.) Consultants experienced and up-to-date in master planning correctional facilities and estimating costs prove very valuable at this point.

Step 2. Review your Needs Assessment Study, particularly focusing on how many beds are needed for a given time period (adjusted for alternatives to incarceration) and your existing system's present and future capabilities.

Step 3. Brainstorm alternative solutions to an inadequate number of beds. During this exercise, all possibilities, regardless of cost, should be listed without attaching any values. Examples may include:

A new "full service" detention facility to replace or supplement existing facilities.

A supplemental facility or annex for one or more of the following:

1. Pre-sentenced inmates/minors
2. Sentenced inmates/minors
3. Work-furlough inmates
4. Public inebriates
5. Mentally ill defendants/offenders
6. Women
7. Maximum, medium or minimum security inmates
8. Food services or other support services
9. Classrooms or other programs

Addition to an existing jail for one or more of the purposes listed above.

Renovation to meet current standards, codes, programs, and populations.

In addition to purpose, other features of each alternative must include:

Design bed capacity.

General location (proximity to courts, other jails and justice offices).

If a courtroom is included, is the judiciary committed to staffing the area.

Approximate size of your site.

Centralization/decentralization of functions such as laundry, food preparation, intake/release, infirmary, and school.

Discuss them. Those that appear obviously inappropriate or unrealistic for your county should be eliminated. They do not warrant additional time.

Step 4. Analyze. Those alternatives that appear to be workable (usually somewhere between three and seven alternatives) require further study. They must be defined further, addressing an estimate of size, total up-front costs (including construction), estimates of staff (including those required for transportation to jails and courts), annual staffing costs and utility costs.

For each alternative, the committee and consultants need to identify: operational efficiency, compatibility with the county's justice system, consistency with county goals and objectives, ability to meet current and future needs, and compliance with applicable codes and standards.

Step 5. Identify and evaluate sites for each alternative. Since a part of each alternative has a specific site or site criteria and since all sites have various acquisition and development costs, sites must be identified and then evaluated. For those that meet all set criteria, site-related costs are estimated. To make comparisons, estimates should include purchase price; added construction costs when poor soils are present, landscaping; moving or demolishing existing structures, and staff and visitor parking, surface or in a parking structure.

Step 6. Select the superior alternative. Then present your choice and supporting logic to the Board of Supervisors and the Board of Corrections (if State funding is sought) for their concurrence.

Step 7. Develop Your Master Plan. With the selected alternative in hand, the Committee and consultants should develop a plan for its implementation. When needs exceed financial resources, an incremental master plan should be developed (i.e., building in stages). The detailed master

plan includes an estimate of all major initial and operational costs.

Step 8. Prepare the appropriate environmental document.

Your county must comply with the relevant environmental regulations. Unless a project receives a negative declaration, an EIR is required. Generally the EIR is prepared by a consultant who will need input from numerous county personnel. The draft document evaluates the projects impacts on the environment and the surrounding community and the ways these impacts can be mitigated. The EIR must go through an extensive public review and approval process for which you need to budget adequate time. Work on the environmental document should begin as early as possible once a site has been selected.



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MASTER PLANNING

To be sure your chosen alternative is the best of the lot, try answering these questions:

1. Does it meet all of your county's major objectives?

2. Is it consistent with your county's philosophies?

3. Does it meet all or most of your needs, both now and in the distant future (e.g., 15 or 30 years)?

4. Is it one of the most efficient ways to provide needed beds now and in the more distant future?

5. Does it meet all codes, standards, and agreed-to guidelines?

6. Is it the least costly initially? If not, does it give the biggest bang for the buck?

7. Is it the least costly to operate per inmate?

8. Can you afford the first phase of the alternative you selected?

9. Are the cost estimates on which you based your decisions realistic?